

Minutes of Planning Commission Meeting #06-01, January 10, 2006

I Roll Call: Commissioners present were Chairman Tucker, Vice-Chair Fitzhugh, Stones, Supplee, and Jeffrey. S. Hatch was present as Clerk. Members of the public present were Mark Bannon, Heidi Davis, Jeff Kantor, Larry Drown, David Magida, Richard Jones, Ron Lyon, Martha Pilgreen, Bizhan YahYazadeh, Joe Zuaro, Bernard Byrne and Mary Comiskey. The Meeting opening time was 7:02 PM.

II Approval of Minutes: There was discussion about the minutes of November 21, 2005, Meeting #05-12. Supplee stated he made a motion, seconded by Stones, to approve the minutes but did not make the amendment to change a portion of them. Jeffrey made the amendment, seconded by Stones, to change the minutes. The amendment was approved 5-0-0. At that point the amended October 17, 2005 minutes were approved with a 4-0-1 vote, Tucker abstained. Tucker requested the statement be inserted after Hanna's letter, "The Planning Commission expressed the opinion that they did not have any jurisdiction over the matter brought fourth by Hanna and therefore the Planning Commission took no action." The minutes will be amended to reflect these changes. With these changes in place, Jeffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of November 21, 2005, Meeting #05-11, seconded by Stones. **The motion passed 5-0-0.**

Tucker brought forth the fact of house keeping that needs to be done. The Selectboard suggested that the Planning Commission adopt the Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy Including Public Deliberation. Tuckers thought was before the proceedings could go forth, these rules need to be in place. The Commissioners had not read the proposed rules in full. Supplee stated a vote could go forward with an option left open that would allow changes be made after all have read the material and should there be something with a cause for concern or need for correction found, it could be brought up at the next meeting. Tucker noted the Section 14, amendments for these rules.

Fitzhugh made a motion to adopt the Rules and Procedures, seconded by Jeffrey. **The motion passed 5-0-0.**

III Public Participation: None.

IV Sign Permits: None.

V Site Plans: The Vermont State Housing Authority project Phase II was being presented by Mark Bannon, Heidi Davis and Jeff Kantor. All three

persons were sworn in by the Chairman. No one else was present to speak to or against the proposal. Bannon made the first portion of the presentation. There were handouts that outlined Phase II. There were 10 new units to be added to the existing 20 units at the Green Mountain Apartments located off Wall Street. The Commissioners viewed the Site Plan of the Project. Lighting was addressed. There will be one new exterior light on a pole, the same as those that exist there now. The doorway lights will be recessed lighting fixtures creating a down cast light lighting the doorways only. The commission may impose lighting restrictions. The Public Works Department has been included in the discussion of the project. Storm water and natural resources are being addressed. Plantings will be placed when the landscaping is done. Davis spoke to the structures. The addition will be connected by a 1 story building that will house 2 handicapped apartments. The rest of the building will be 2 stories. There will be an elevator in the front area of the two story portion of the new building. The existing foot path that extends from the common to the foot bridge over Dog River to Water Street will not be disturbed. The new addition will only be 3 feet taller than the existing building. There will be a common space for the tenants in the single story portion of the new structures. At the conclusion of the project, a Mylar will be filled with the Town outlining the property owned by the VSHA. Some of the property will be conveyed to the Municipality. The commissioners were pleased with the presentation. This portion of the Hearing was closed.

Larry Drown presented his project. He was sworn in by the Chairman. Drown explained the property location. He explained the project and the fact there were 2 properties. His project was to be built on the smaller of the two. He wants to build a one story warehouse style building. The lighting and plantings will conform to the Zoning Board of Adjustment conditions placed on the project. The project has a Conditional Use permit for Section 705, Number 6; Retail and Personal service store. Should anything change, Mr. Drown will come before the Planning Commission and request the proper approval for the changes. This portion of the Hearing was closed.

Norwich University was represented by David Magida and Bizhan YahYazadeh (NU), Richard Jones (Perry, Dean and Rogers Architects), Ron Lyon (Dubois and King Engineers) and Martha Pilgreen (Lighting Architect). Also present to speak on the project were Bernard Byrne, Mary Comiskey and Joe Zuaro. All were sworn in by the Chairman.

A power point presentation was created for the Phase I project. Magida presented the first segment of the power point. Explaining the focus of the project was to bring students back to campus, Magida brought the Commission on an animated trip of the proposed changes to the campus over a period of time, this being Phase I of Norwich University's Master Plan. Phase II and III will be implemented over a 20 year period. Phase I covers student housing with dormitories and expanding the dining and student services with an addition to Harmon Hall. Dormitories will be constructed on the area where tennis courts were. This is now parking and will

be moved temporarily to the site of the dormitories for Phase II. A road will be built for access to the temporary parking lot and as another access to the proposed Phase I dormitories. Harmon Hall will be modified and expanded to accept the larger number of students. The proposed buildings facade will be consistent with the current buildings façade.

Harmon Hall modifications will include parking changes and changes in the access to the docking area for trucks. A new access to Vermont Route 12 will be incorporated in the changes. The only ingress / egress to this area will be from Vermont Route 12.

Jones spoke to the buildings and traffic circulation of both students and vehicles. All the buildings will be of a high quality to ensure longevity and energy efficiency. The landscaping the Commissioners viewed on the animation will address all student traffic and access including those with disabilities. Vehicular traffic on the campus will be minimized and parking addressed. The infrastructure and drainage will be upgraded to compensate for the increase in population and structures.

Jones addressed exterior and interior lighting. It is essential this project keep the impact from invasive lighting to a minimum. This will be done by lighting housed in the underside of hand rails creating ambient light for steps and walkways. Secondary walkways will be lit by Bollard fixtures thirty six inches tall emitting an ambient light. The intent is to light the walking surface only. Interior lighting of the buildings will be on a Building Management System to reduce sight spillage onto abutting properties. The goal is to only see ambient light and not the direct source. This type of lighting will be more effective and efficient.

Lyon spoke of fire and emergency equipment having a dual access to all the facilities. The walkways can serve as access in time of an emergency. Where necessary, the Bollard fixtures are removable to allow access. There have been meetings with the Fire Chief and the Town Manager to discuss emergency vehicle access. The tallest building of the Phase I proposal is 66 feet. The Town Fire Chief and State Fire Marshal have examined the campus access and blue prints for the buildings. They are comfortable with the access to the buildings and the fact the buildings are all equipped with sprinkler systems for fire control.

Zuaro asked about the lighting on the parking lots located on the South-West portion of the campus. He further spoke to the lights of vehicles leaving the temporary parking area. The proximity of his home to the road allows the headlights to shine on his home. Magida stated the lights on the parking lots would be addressed in the future. However, he would monitor light from the egress of vehicles from the temporary lot and make changes as necessary to avoid the intrusion of the vehicular light into his home.

Drown had concerns with the fire truck not able to reach the height of these buildings. He requested information to the fact that the platform truck will or will not reach the height needed.

Bernard Byrne made a presentation addressing the new access to Harmon Hall from Vermont Route 12. He was concerned with truck traffic moving goods and materials to the cafeteria, book store and mail room. He questioned what problems would be caused by the staff when they left. Would the traffic on the weekends increase? He questioned if there was enough sight distance for these vehicles to exit the area safely. Magida spoke to the issue. The new access area had been addressed and when the state was involved for the curb cut, all these issues would be addressed.

There was a question raised about the Recreation A area that the temporary parking lot and Phase II and Phase III were to be built on. This use is not permitted in this area or Zone. There will be more discussion about this at the next meeting. Norwich University will come forward with a proposal to be presented to the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission will meet on Monday, January 16, 2006 to deliberate the proposals heard tonight. The clerk was instructed to set the necessary warnings for this to happen.

VI Other Business: None.

VII Discussion: None.

VIII Public Participation; non agenda items: None.

IX Next Regular Meeting: February 20, 2006.

X Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Fitzhugh and seconded by Stones. **The motion passed 5-0-0.** The time was 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Hatch
Zoning Administrator / Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting; however, they are substantially correct.